

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1924

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJ: ROVIRA'S VIEWS ON US-SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS

1. I CALLED ON UNDER SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROVIRA MARCH 21 AS HE INDICATED HE WOULD LIKE TO TALK WITH ME ABOUT THE PRESENT STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS ON THE AGREEMENT OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION, PRIOR TO EASTER WEEK AND THE NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ON APRIL 2.

2. ROVIRA EXPRESSED HIMSELF AS MOST PLEASED WITH HIS RELATIONSHIPS WITH AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY AND ALSO THE FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH THE TWO DELEGATIONS CONDUCTED THEIR BUSINESS. AT THE SAME TIME, HE FELT THAT NOT MUCH PROGRESS HAD BEEN REGISTERED IN THE JUST COMPLETED WASHINGTON ROUND. THE SPANISH HAD SET FORTH THEIR POINTS OF VIEW AND HE HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE IN THE NEXT ROUND FOR THE AMERICAN DELEGATION TO COMMENT MORE SPECIFICALLY ON THE SPANISH PRESENCE.

3. ROVIRA SAID THAT MINISTER CORTINA BELIEVED THAT PARAGRAPH 6 OF THE 1974 DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES SHOULD BE THE PRINCIPAL POINT OF REFERENCE FOR BOTH DELEGATIONS IN THE NEGOTIATION. SPAIN HAD AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN WESTERN DEFENSE AND IT WAS NOT JUST A QUESTION OF US-SPANISH INTERESTS. SPAIN WANTS TO BE MORE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH EUROPE AND WITH NATO. NATO, IN TURN, SHOULD RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF US FACILITIES TO THE OVERALL DEFENSE POSTURE.

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4. I TOLD ROVIRA THAT I WAS SURE THAT AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY

WOULD COMMENT TO THE EXTENT HE COULD ON THE SPANISH PRESENTATION, ALTHOUGH IT DID NOT SEEM TO ME THAT IN CERTAIN AREAS THE PRESENTATION HAD BEEN SUFFICIENTLY PRECISE. I THOUGHT THAT THERE COULD BE A FURTHER COMMENT ON ROVIRA'S PRESENTATION ON CHANGED STRATEGY, BUT ON THIS ROVIRA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD RECIEVED A PAPER FROM THE US SIDE. WITH REGARD TO THE NATO ASPECT, I SAID THAT THE US VIEW WAS WELL KNOWN. I BELIEVED THAT THE GOS ITSELF COULD DO CONSIDERABLE EDUCATIONAL WORK WITH THE OTHER NATO ALLIES WITH RESPECT TO ITS INTERNAL POLITICAL PROGRAMS. TO THIS, ROVIRA REPLIED THAT THE ATTITUDE OF MANY OF THE NORTHERN EUROPEANS WAS NOT ONLY INFLUENCED BY THEIR DISLIKE OF THE REGIME, BUT ALSO BY THEIR LACK OF CONCERN FOR WHAT HAPPENED IN THE SOUTHERN FLANK. HE WAS NOT SURE THAT EVEN IF SPAIN WAS COMPLETELY DEMOCRATIC, THE NORTHERN EUROPEANS WOULD BE CONCERNED BY THE SITUATION OF THE SOUTHERN FLANK. I TOLD ROVIRA THAT WE WERE CONSTANTLY IMPRESSING UPON OUR NATO ALLIES THE VITAL STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA. I ALSO SAID I COMPLETELY AGREED WITH AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY THAT ANY REDUCTION IN SPANISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE WESTERN DEFENSE POSITION COULD HARDLY BE USEFUL TO ANY EFFORT WHICH MIGHT BE MADE WITH RESPECT TO FINDING SOME FORM OF SPANISH ASSOCIATION WITH THE NATO DEFENSE STRUCTURE.

5. I TOLD ROVIRA THAT IN MY VIEW IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE US TO FORMULATE A PRECISE POSITION WITHOUT KNOWING IN GREATER DETAIL SPANISH VIEWS ON US FACILITIES AND ON WHAT SPAIN BELIEVED TO BE ITS NEEDS TO UPGRADE ITS MILITARY STRENGTH. IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE PRESENTATION BY GENERAL GUTIERREZ MELLADO WAS NOT SUFFICIENTLY PRECISE TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO COMMENT IN A MEANINGFUL WAY. I BELIEVED THAT THE US WOULD APPROACH SPANISH REQUESTS IN A SYMPATHETIC WAY, BUT THERE WERE CLEARLY LIMITS TO OUR ABILITY TO SATISFY THE ARMS AND LOGISTICS NEEDS OF OUR FRIENDS.

6. ROVIRA SAID THAT THE SPANISH MILITARY HAD NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO FORMULATE A COORDINATED POSITION AS TO ITS NEEDS. HE LAMENTED THE INCREASED ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS AND SAID THAT HIS POSITION WAS SOMEWHAT SIMILAR TO THAT OF A MODERATOR. HE HOPED TO TALK TO THE SPANISH MILITARY BEFORE THE NEXT ROUND IN MADRID TO SEE WHETHER THEY

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COULD NOT COME UP WITH SOMETHING MORE PRECISE. I SAID THAT THIS WOULD BE USEFUL AND I REFERRED TO SPANISH ACTION ON THEIR REQUEST TO PURCHASE F4E'S AS A CONFUSING SIGNAL IN ALL THIS. A WEEK AGO, THE SPANISH HAD SIGNED A LETTER OF INTENT FOR THE F4E'S, BUT TODAY I HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT THIS LETTER HAD BEEN REVOKED. I ASKED ROVIRA WHETHER HE COULD SHED ANY LIGHT ON THIS ACTION. HE SAID THAT IT WAS THE FIRST HE HAD HEARD OF THIS AND PROMISED TO LET ME KNOW.

7. IN CONCLUSION, ROVIRA AGAIN EMPHASIZED HIS HOPE THAT IN THE APRIL ROUND THE US WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO COMMENT MORE CONCRETELY ON THE SPANISH PRESENTATION IN THE HOPE THAT SOME FORWARD MOTION COULD BE REGISTERED. HE WONDERED WHETHER THE SECRETARY'S ABSENCE FROM WASHINGTON WOULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE US DELEGATION TO GET ITS INSTRUCTIONS. I SAID I THOUGHT NOT.
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